

all the glamour and the trauma

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/13026867) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/13026867>.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	Choose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	Gen , M/M
Fandom:	Marvel Cinematic Universe , Thor (Movies)
Relationship:	En Dwi Gast Grandmaster/Loki , Loki & Thor
Character:	Loki (Marvel) , Thor (Marvel) , En Dwi Gast Grandmaster , (mostly in absentia)
Additional Tags:	Post-Thor: Ragnarok (2017) , Dubious Consent , Implied/Referenced Dubious Consent , Consent Issues , Problematic Attitudes About Consent , Loki (Marvel) Has Issues , Thor: Ragnarok (2017) Spoilers , Psychological Trauma , relatively mild at least for me , this fic could also be called , Loki has issues with admitting he doesn't have control over everything
Stats:	Published: 2017-12-16 Words: 2966

all the glamour and the trauma

by [Lise](#)

Summary

Loki deals with a lot of things by not dealing with them. Unfortunately that situation is not exactly tenable.

Or, Loki tries to process certain things that happened on Sakaar.

Notes

An anon sent a prompt in my inbox talking about the dubcon Frostmaster fic I've been writing, specifically [what you want, not what you need](#), and asking how it would affect Loki in the aftermath of the movie. So I wrote a thing about that, because what do I love more than crunchy difficult psychological aftermath of my PWP? Well, a lot of things, but I do love that.

Warnings, again: this fic is a lot about issues of consent, and a character's (Loki's) ideas about consent that I do not endorse. That should, I hope, be clear, but I think it probably bears repeating. There's some description of aftermath of largely unacknowledged trauma and discussion of rape. Thanks to [my beta](#) for reading this over.

One of the things Loki had learned very quickly about survival in recent years was the necessity of

compartmentalization. If something could not be changed, and could not be dealt with, then it had to be pushed aside and locked away to be dealt with later. Prioritize. Focus on the immediate necessities. Everything else could wait until later. Or, preferably, never.

The trouble, though, was that 'later' almost always arrived.

Since about, oh, two hours after Thor had come back to Asgard and ruined *everything*, Loki had been compartmentalizing almost desperately. Odin's death, the certainty that Thor was dead as well along with probably most of Asgard, his stepsister intent on death and destruction - all set aside, very firmly, for *later*, when he wasn't frantically backstabbing and scheming and fucking his way to (relative) safety on Sakaar. And as far as he was concerned, with the amount of drugs, alcohol, and other diversions to be had, he could probably defer that for a very, very long time.

Obviously, that hadn't worked out.

And now here he was, sitting in a cramped cabin on a spaceship full of the remnants of Asgard and a ragged band of Sakaaran barbarians, with the full force of 'later' crashing down on his head. At least Thor was alive, and some of Asgard. On the other hand, Odin was still dead, and he'd been personally, directly responsible for burning the only home he'd ever had to a crisp. Never mind that it had been necessary.

Havoc wreaked on three Realms now. Only six more and you'll match Odin's record. Of course, Svartalfheim is already dead, so you can probably leave that one off now.

He bent over and put his head on his knees, laughing.

No one seemed to be holding a grudge against Loki for unleashing Surtur, which was a pleasant enough surprise. They mostly seemed focused on the fact that he'd brought the ship that had saved them, which was an even more pleasant surprise. That, at least, eased the burn of some of that particular guilt.

(Loki did not like feeling guilty. Remorse, in his opinion, was one of the most unpleasant and pointless of emotions.)

He still didn't know how he felt about Odin. It did occur to him, lying awake listening to the hum of the ship, that he'd been even more right than he'd known to tell Frigga that he'd been following in Odin's footsteps. He wondered bitterly if that wasn't part of Odin's anger: the unfortunate mirror of what he'd thought he'd covered over and (literally) locked away.

Thor wrestled with the stain of that legacy more than Loki did, but then Thor had always been an idealist.

The thought was fonder than it had any right to be.

He expected that to be the end of it.

It wasn't.

Loki was idling, listening to Thor enthusing on the virtues of his Midgardian friends at some length to a disinterested looking Valkyrie.

"They're not that great," Loki said, mostly under his breath. Apparently Thor heard him, though, because he looked over and shook his head.

“Don’t look so dour, Loki,” he said. “Just because they don’t like *you*.”

“I wonder why,” Valkyrie said dryly. Loki scowled at her.

“I think that’s a fairly *good* reason to have a low opinion of them,” Loki said. Thor snorted.

“You’ll do fine,” he said. “You’re good at making friends when you try. You certainly managed ably on Sakaar, didn’t you? Befriending the Grandmaster himself, no less.”

Loki fell still. Valkyrie made a noise that was fairly clearly trying not to be a laugh, her face almost in her drink. Thor narrowed his eye, glancing back and forth between them.

“What did I say?” He asked. Loki stood up abruptly.

“Look at the time. I was going to go examine the engines,” he announced, and left.

The thing was:

Loki prided himself on the fact that no one could *make* him do anything he didn’t want to do. Which meant, simply put, that whatever he did, he wanted to do. No exceptions.

Do what it takes to survive. Whatever it takes.

Sakaar’s gift was that it was an easy place to lose yourself. Sakaar’s curse was that it was an easy place to lose yourself, especially when you were trying. Loki had arrived, taken one look at the tower standing above all else, and known at once that was where he needed to go. He hadn’t looked back, hadn’t hesitated. He’d spared one thought for Asgard, one for Thor, and then left them behind with the trash. His feet had never touched the sand of the arena. Loki had walked in the front door with a smile and a *pretty face* (his words, not Loki’s) and made himself at home.

So what if that involved getting on his knees for the Grandmaster (and whoever was joining him that day)? What did it matter? It was only his body, and it wasn’t as though it didn’t feel *good*. Whatever else he was, Sakaar’s master was a connoisseur of sexual pleasures, and if there were ever doubts, it was easy to drown them in one of the many, *many* varieties of intoxicant available. With a little chemical assistance, it was almost easy to forget that his survival rested on the whim of a half-mad immortal.

And if he never said *no* then he could just pretend that if he did it would matter.

He’d chosen to survive. No shame in that. Noble self-sacrifice was for *Aesir*, foolish idiots like Thor who thought death in futile glory was better than victory won by cheating. Loki had already tried that once and still bore the scars; he didn’t particularly fancy doing it again.

No one could make him do anything he didn’t want to do. His choice. Always, always, his choice.

When Thor found him in the ship’s bar (of course there was a bar, this ship *was* Sakaaran) he’d worked himself into a proper temper. He stood in the doorway behind Loki - he could feel Thor’s looming presence and chose to ignore it in favor of sipping one of the few bottles Valkyrie hadn’t emptied. Probably because it tasted like ass.

“Loki,” Thor said lowly.

“That is my name,” Loki said.

“Val told me.”

“Suitably vague,” Loki said, but he turned around, leaning his elbows back on the bar. Thor looked like he wanted to strike something with lightning and wasn’t seeing any viable targets. The latter half was a relief, at least.

“I didn’t know.”

“Still vague.” Loki took another sip from the bottle and grimaced. “Some advice, Thor: it’s only subtle if it’s intelligible.”

“You were the Grandmaster’s-” He seemed to stumble over the word. Loki did not help him. “--lover?”

Loki had to laugh, though it came out a little hysterical. “Really, Thor? That’s the best you can do?”

Thor did not look amused. “Whatever word you would prefer, then-”

“I would *prefer*,” Loki said, “that we not have this conversation.”

Thor, of course, did not accept that answer. “I knew that he was -*flirting* with you. But I didn’t think-”

“Didn’t think what,” Loki said, raising his eyebrows. “That I’d roll over for a degenerate like him? Well, I did. Several times, in fact. And not just him, either-”

“*Stop it*,” Thor said. “You’re trying to shock me so I won’t press you.”

“You wanted honesty,” Loki said, giving him a slightly savage smile. “That is all I am giving you. Honesty. Or do you expect me to tell you how *horrible* the experience was, fall down and weep on your shoulder for my *violation*-”

The way Thor’s jaw tightened suggested that he had, indeed, been expecting that. Loki scoffed.

“I am no innocent, Thor,” he said. “You should really know otherwise.”

“I *know* that-”

“So stop acting like my virtue needs protecting,” Loki interrupted. “It doesn’t. I made my own choices. As you said, I *made friends*.” He smiled that nasty smile again. “But don’t worry. I shan’t try the same tactics on your Midgardian pets.”

Thor was still looking at him like he wanted to argue. Loki tossed back the rest of the bottle and set it back down. “If you really need someone to mother,” he said caustically, “there are at minimum forty orphans on this ship that I am sure need the service. I, however, do not.”

Thor opened his mouth, closed it, shook his head, and walked out. Loki waited until he was sure he was out of earshot to exhale.

He realized that one of his hands was shaking and stared at it until it stilled.

“You’re no innocent, are you? That’s good. A little - experience, opens all kinds of doors. Always...always more to learn, though, here, try this...”

Loki tried to take another drink, scowled at the empty bottle, and set it down a little too hard.

He would have avoided Valkyrie to communicate his displeasure, except that she wouldn't care if he did avoid her. So he just confronted her directly.

"Why did you think you needed to tell Thor?" He demanded. She gave him a blank look for a moment before it cleared.

"Oh," she said. "About you and En Dwi Gast. Right. I didn't think it was important."

"There's a reason *I* didn't," Loki snapped. Valkyrie squinted at him, again in apparent incomprehension.

"I didn't think promiscuity was an issue Asgard cared about. Did that change when Odin decided he was going into the peace business?"

"No," Loki said through his teeth. "But Thor seems to have gotten it into his head that I was - *raped*." Valkyrie looked at him for several long moments, and Loki felt his scowl deepen. "*What?*"

She shrugged. "Nothing."

"*What.*"

"Really, nothing. You're just very defensive about this. Like you're insulted he'd think that. It's an interesting reaction."

"What is *that* supposed to mean?"

"You're smart, right? I bet you can figure it out if you *really* think about it." She paused. "I'll give you a hint. It has to do with control. And you not wanting anyone else to think you don't have it." Loki opened his mouth, then closed it. Valkyrie tapped her temple. "See? I'm smart, too."

"Not as smart as you think you are," Loki snapped after a moment. "Unsurprising. Centuries of constant drinking will do that."

She bared her teeth at him. "Apparently so do a few weeks of constant fucking." She turned on her heel and left. Loki watched her go, scowling. Thor was wrong. And whatever Valkyrie had been - *implying*, she was wrong, too. Whatever they thought they knew-

He'd accepted everything that was going to happen. Walked into it, eyes open, knowing...knowing some boundaries might be pushed. He wasn't blind and he wasn't a fool. The Grandmaster got off on control, so Loki had given him what he wanted. And *liked* it.

Maybe if Thor came poking around again, he'd just tell him that. *He tied me down and played with me until I was howling and it felt so damn good I could break of it-*

He was shivering again. Loki took slow, deep, breaths until he stopped.

A bittersweet pill dissolving on his tongue. "No one's bothered to treat you the way you deserve, have they? I'm going to fix that. You're going to feel so good by the time I'm done with you."

He laughed. "Why does that sound like a threat?"

"A threat? Darling, sweetheart, what makes you think I would ever threaten you?"

Everything he'd done-

Fuck Thor. *Fuck* him. Shame burned in his stomach and it was *his* fault for making Loki feel like this, like something was *wrong*. Nothing was.

All it had been was just another game. He'd played thousands before. Just because this one involved something a little different from his usual, just because he'd spent days drowned in a haze of alcohol so he didn't have to think, just because maybe everything hadn't been his ideal...

Loki swore under his breath and stalked back to his rooms in a foul mood.

Thor, of course, could not leave well enough alone.

He showed up one night as the rhythms of the ship were turning toward sleep, almost ambushing Loki while he was half-dressed. He pulled a shirt on quickly before Thor could comment on his scars - he wasn't interested in having that conversation, either - and scowled at him.

"What?"

"We need to talk," Thor said, sounding mulish.

"An ominous beginning."

"About you." He paused. "About...what happened."

Loki almost groaned. "This *again*?"

"You say 'again' as though we actually talked last time."

"We did talk," Loki said. "You just didn't like what I had to say."

"I'm just not convinced it's *true*." Thor crossed his arms. "You're proud, Loki. I can't see you not being - *bothered* by having to..." He trailed off, probably searching for delicate wording.

"I didn't *have to* do anything," Loki said. "I knew exactly what I was doing. Rather than get myself killed, I took the choice that would leave me alive, unharmed, and in a position to do better. That you think I should be ashamed-"

"I don't think you should be *ashamed*."

"Are you sure?" Loki rose. "Are you sure that you aren't bothering me about this because *you* are? Embarrassed that your brother played a whore to save his own skin?"

"I didn't call you-"

"Maybe not," Loki sneered. "Only because you'd rather I was *forced* than that I had a choice and decided to let him fuck me."

"Loki," Thor said, his lips twisting, and then stopped. He settled back on his heels, then strode over and sat down on Loki's desk, pushing his notes out of the way. "So you could have left," he said finally. "Whenever you wanted, you could have walked away."

Maybe. Possibly. He hadn't tried. "And gone where?"

"Anywhere." Thor's eye bored into him, as though all the intensity of his two eyes had now been focused into one.

He could have tried. But there was no reason to try. Even a precarious position close to power was better than no power at all. "I never wanted to."

"Whose idea was it?" Thor asked, still unnervingly direct. "Did you seduce him?"

Loki scoffed. "I hardly needed to."

"And you could have refused. Of course."

Of course, Loki meant to say, but he choked on it. He remembered how the Grandmaster had taken his chin in his hand and said *ooh, I like this one, he can stay*, and smiled, and a shiver had crawled down Loki's spine that left him cold. The feeling of a door slamming shut behind him, and locking.

No way out but through.

Thor sat back, apparently grimly satisfied. Loki felt his expression pinch.

"It isn't that simple."

"It sounds it to me."

"It would, to you." Loki looked away. "You have never had to *compromise*. You have never had to make a choice between what you want and what is necessary to survive—"

"I had to choose to sacrifice my home to save my people," Thor said quietly. Loki stopped, then twitched a shoulder.

"Fine. Then maybe you understand better now that sometimes a choice is not a choice."

"That's—" Thor shook his head. "If there isn't a choice, then by definition—"

"Between an unpleasant death and a pleasant humiliation, I chose the latter," Loki said.

"Being threatened into doing what someone else wants on pain of death isn't a choice."

"Debatable."

"No," Thor said, angrily. "It is *not* debatable. Why - why are you arguing this with me?"

Loki's fists clenched. "Because I am not a *victim*, Thor," he snapped. "I am not some - hapless waif stumbling into sin, I am not a virgin going weeping to the bedchamber. *I knew what I was doing.*"

"I never said you didn't!" Thor said, audibly frustrated. "But—"

"But *what?*"

Thor inhaled and then let it out, visibly calming himself. "Loki," he said slowly, "the world is not...divided between ingenues and seducers. Just because you are not one does not mean you must be the other." He paused, studying Loki. His skin prickled nervously. "For someone whose mind follows such complicated paths, you divide the world along startlingly sharp lines."

Loki glanced aside. "I do not wish to speak of this further."

"Do you think it makes you less? If you were not precisely one or the other?"

“Don’t you?” Loki snapped. “Is that not exactly what all this is about?” He shook his head. “Either way - it doesn’t matter. And, as I said, *I do not want to speak of this further.*”

Thor frowned at him, looking displeased. “All right,” he said finally. “Okay. If you insist that you are not...*you are well?*”

“I am *fine*, Thor.”

“I will...let it go.” He sounded profoundly reluctant about it, though. “But it feels wrong to *me*. Nothing that you did. But that *he* should have touched you at all when you could not refuse.” Loki blinked at him. Thor reached out and clasped his shoulder, then turned and walked away. He even closed the door quietly after him.

I was not helpless, Loki thought viciously, but wasn’t that exactly how he had felt? Helpless. Out of control. He’d chosen to give it up but-

And you could have refused, Thor said.

Loki sat down hard and put his head down on his knees. He didn’t know how to explain to Thor how it was to be in a situation where you knew that your refusal would have no meaning; that the only power you had was in choosing how to assent.

“Say yes,” the Grandmaster said. Thumb running across Loki’s cheek and he shivered, his blood burning under the skin.

“Why would I say anything else?”

Please [drop by the archive and comment](#) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!